

# GAYLAXY

Empowering eXpressions



**BROKEN BODIES, RESILIENT SOULS**

A photograph of two shirtless men. One man is in the foreground, leaning his head against the other's shoulder. The man in the background has his arm around the other's waist. They are both looking towards the camera with serious expressions.

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# Editor's Note

Welcome to the first issue of the year 2013. I hope that all of you had a great start to the year. This issue was to get released in February, but thanks to a broken laptop, things got delayed. But don't worry, the Mar-Apr issue will be out soon too. We are trying to get back on schedule and need your support in that. So, anyone who is willing to volunteer and help us bring out the magazine, do drop an email. We are specifically short of good graphic designers.

A lot of things have happened in the world since the release of the last issue. In the US, President Obama has come out in support of marriage equality; the US Supreme Court has started hearing the case of Prop 8. In France the Govt. is about to make it legal for same-sex couples to marry and adopt children too. The Catholic Church has a new Pope, who till now has not blamed all evils of this world on gays (phewww.. what superpowers we have!!). Closer home, the country has seen widespread protests against sexual violence faced by women. Hyderabad and Chandigarh have also hosted their first pride marches. The tragic death of a Kashmiri student in EFLU has once again brought the issue of homophobia in campuses in focus.

In this issue, we look at the various kinds of violence- sexual, physical and mental- that sexual minorities in India have to face. The violence is perpetrated not only by society, but also by family, friends and the State. Andy Stephen writes about the various aspects related to the suicide of a PhD student in EFLU campus, the insensitive handling by the authorities and the lessons we must learn from it. Another student of the same university gives an account of the rampant homophobia among the faculty and students inside the campus. Navchintan writes how a woman suffers when a gay man marries an unsuspecting woman under family pressure and advises others against it. Sachin Jain writes about one of the Parents Meets that was held as part of QAM celebrations and how it helps families deal with the issue of acceptance.

There are a lot more interesting articles for you to read. Do send us your feedback. Until then, happy reading.

Love,  
Sukhi



**Sukhiman**

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# BROKEN BODIES, RESILIENT SOULS

Sexual minorities have to face violence at multiple fronts and the Govt. chose to look away by not including recommendations of Justice Verma Committee report, writes **Sukhdeep Singh**

**M**adhu, a trans-sexual activist in Kolkata was on her way to meet some friends, when a group of four guys cornered her at the Madhyamgram railway station in Kolkata and wanted her to come to the local club with them. When she refused, they started pulling and pushing her at the platform itself. Her repeated requests for help from people did not yield any response, and when her ordeal

just didn't seem to end, an old lady came forward and asked her to board the train to Barasat with her. Though Madhu managed to escape from the situation, she was deeply traumatized and it took her a long time to gain her confidence. "I could not sleep at night for months and used to get nightmares. I was quite young at that time and didn't know what to do, neither could I share the incident with

anyone," she says. Madhu had still not undergone SRS (Sex Re-assignment Surgery) at that time.

Ever since the notorious rape case in Delhi last December, a lot of discussions and protests have been going on in the society, media and parliament over the increasing sexual violence being faced by women in India. The Justice Verma Committee formed to recommend changes to bring

down and curb the violence, recommended actions to protect sexual minorities too. Despite that, apart from a few narratives of sexual violence/rape, the violence faced by the sexual minorities has largely been ignored by both the society and media.

## State Violence

Sexual violence isn't the only kind of violence that the community faces. People from the community often have to face both physical and mental violence from not only the society, family and friends, but also from the State. Anis Ray Chaudhuri, a gay-rights activist from Kolkata says, "LGBTs face harassment not merely federal, we face harassment from multi-dimensional sources, from parents, teachers, peers, society... and it encompasses every sphere of our lives."

Anis, who was earlier associated with **Amitié** Trust, recalled an incident of State sponsored violence when they were asked to vacate their stall at a Municipal Fair in Rishra under the Hooghly District in West Bengal. After having being denied a stall earlier at Chandannagar, **Amitié** Trust secured a stall at the Rishra Municipal Fair. However, on the third evening, some members of the organizing team asked them to vacate their stall and confiscated their materials. "We had materials that dealt with HIV/AIDS and also with



sexuality. The Municipal Chairman accused us of having obscene material," narrates Anis. When they decided to hold a signature campaign, a few people tore it down and manhandled them. However, to their shock, when they went to the Police

**Apart from a few narratives of sexual violence/rape, the violence faced by the sexual minorities has largely been ignored by both the society and media**

Station, the officers refused to file an FIR and after waiting for over 5hrs, only took down a General Diary. **Amitié** decided to file a petition in the Kolkata High Court and placed the material before the court. The Court, after hearing both parties, finally ruled that **Amitié** was trying to fight

common misnomers around homosexuality, which they had every right to do in public. But rejected their case on technical grounds saying that they themselves claimed that they had hired the place for awareness around HIV/AIDS and health issues. "It was a very learning experience for us. We were forcefully evicted and we could not defend ourselves properly too!" says Anis.

One may also recall here the harassment of the volunteers of Naz Foundation and Bharosa Trusts in 2001 when Lucknow Police raided their offices and seized materials pertaining to HIV/AIDS prevention, including educational brochures, videos, and condoms. Four people were arrested and charged under Sec 377 for 'conspiracy to commit sodomy'. This particular case brought to fore not only the way Police in this country often harasses the sexual minority and groups



Protesters protesting against the gangrape of a girl in Delhi and demanding safety for women and strict laws against rape

working for their welfare, but also led to a series of petitions in the High Court which finally led to the decriminalisation of homosexuality in India and a reading down of Sec 377 by the Delhi High Court in July 2009.

Another case that Anis shares bears uncanny similarity with the Naz case. "In Nov 2003, during the formative years of **Amitié**, I was attending a marriage ceremony and was informed that some friends were arrested by police. When we reached, two people were put in the lock up and would not be released till the next morning." The allegations against the arrested three were of obscenity and misbehaving in public. The three boys were planning for activities in a park in Chandannagar (under Hooghly District in West Bengal) for celebration of AIDS Day on 1<sup>st</sup> Dec when a

lady complained about them. "The constable picked up three weaker people out of a group of 10, who were weak socially, economically and educationally, and also feminine in their demeanor," tells Anis, hinting at how the weak are often targeted by

**We are born and brought up in an atmosphere of violence. Everything that comes naturally to us is looked down upon**

Police. "We got help from a lawyer and they were bailed. But the lawyer asked to plead guilty in the court and pay a fine and buy freedom!" However, they contested the case, which dragged on for 5 years and was finally dismissed by the court as the prosecution could not prove

the charges. But the effect that this had on their lives has been devastating. "They could not further their education or seek Govt. employment because they were all convicted people. 5 years is not a matter of joke for a young person. Moreover, everyone is not out to their family and it is very tough for people to explain why they have a court case against them," tells Anis.

## Societal Violence

It is not just the police that harass sexual minorities, the society at large remains hostile to them, especially to feminine boys and transgenders, and this hostility is often condoned by the Police in their refusal to lodge complaints.

In another incident of sexual harassment with her, Madhu, while on her way to a



A marcher in Delhi Gay Pride March 2011

friend's house in a rickshaw on a Bandh Day in Barasat (Kolkata), was teased, groped and physically assaulted by few men affiliated to the leftist party CITU. "They said it's a holiday, we will spend the day with you," recalls Madhu. She decided to fight her assailants this time and also lodge an FIR. However, the scene at the Police Station was disappointing, with the police personnel refusing to lodge an FIR. Madhu had to meet the Officer-in-Charge and there was just a General Diary for her complaint. Instead, the policemen asked her not to take things further. "They asked me not to press further, saying these are party men, you have to live in the same area and they might harass you further!" tells Madhu. "I often get to hear this line: 'Since you are like this, that is why such things happen to you,'" she adds.

Anis blames the extremely violent atmosphere in the society towards sexual minorities for the violence

## You can deal with all situations, but when you face violence from your own community, you break

that they have to endure. "We are born and brought up in an atmosphere of violence. Everything that comes naturally to us is looked down upon. From childhood we keep hearing the word *gaandu* as an expletive. So we immediately get the meaning even before knowing a person who is really gay. So we are terrified to come out." Narrating an incident that left him terrified and wondering whether he should have come out at all, Anis says, "I got in terms with my sexuality at the age of 27. I was very cocooned. One day, a *para*(locality) boy sitting at roadside started abusing me and calling me names. I was 31 at that time and had never experienced such a thing. I felt I should not have exposed myself by coming out."

### Violence in Relationships

In what could be called as a relationship gone sour, a male-to-female transgender called Subir was killed in 2007 and the case closed without any proper investigation. Subir, a resident of Arambagh

in Hooghly district, was in a relationship with another man. While Subir was financially sound, her boyfriend's financial status was weak, and Subir supported him. However, under family pressure to marry, Subir's boyfriend started avoiding her and agreed to marry according to family's wishes. Unable to bear this betrayal in love, Subir confronted him at his house, where a bitter dual started between the two sides. Subir was abused both physically and verbally, and in the scuffle that ensued, she ended up injuring her boyfriend.

When after some days, Subir went to meet her boyfriend again, her boyfriend's family raised an alarm that she had come to kill him, and she was chased away by the villagers. But things didn't stop there. Her house was attacked too and ransacked, and later put on fire. Her charred body was found on the rooftop next day. The police registered it as a case of suicide and no forensic tests were conducted, although the villagers say her body bore marks of physical abuse. **Amitié** was approached by Subir's uncle for legal help later, but with much of the evidence destroyed, it was technically too late to re-open the case.

### Community Violence

"You can deal with all

situations, but when you face violence from your own community, you break," tells Teesta, a trans-sexual activist from Kolkata who also runs a SRS solution. "Even within the community, people view transgender/trans-sexual as sex-workers," she says. Teesta also complains that many people from the community remain mute spectators when some transgender is being harassed, and come to empathise later. "Don't make us a minority within minority," she appeals

## State Laws and Justice Verma Report

The common thread connecting all these incidents is either the harassment by Police, as had happened in the Naaz and Chandannagar case, or the refusal by Police personnel to file an FIR, sometimes because of their own prejudices, and also because there is no specific law to protect such vulnerable people. Often, there is confusion as to which Section of IPC to invoke under such cases.

"Even if an FIR is lodged, the police would not deal with it as a sexual harassment case because that happens only to 'women' and this is more of an assault," tells Pawan Dhall, a gay rights activist. Teesta testifies the difficulty in getting an FIR filed. "During my pre-SRS

**Even if an FIR is lodged, the police would not deal with it as a sexual harassment case because that happens only to 'women' and this is more of an assault**

stage, I was raped by some men. I lodged an FIR and mentioned the word rape. The advocate said that I had written a wrong word as such a thing was not possible and my case was dismissed." She advocates for modification of the definition of word rape beyond just penile-vaginal penetration. "If someone tortures psychologically too, it should be in the definition... such violations are sometimes more strong than physical violence," she argues.

These views have been echoed by the Justice Verma Committee report, which was formed by the Govt. of India to recommend changes to the criminal law to provide for quicker trial and harsher punishments for cases of sexual assault. In its report, the committee stresses on the need to recognize sexual minorities, including transgenders. "We must also recognize that our society has the need to recognize different sexual orientations a human reality," the report reads, "Further, we are clear that Article 15(c) of the

constitution of India uses the word "sex" as including sexual orientation." It also calls upon protection of sexual minorities by the State: "Thus the right to sexual orientation is a human right guaranteed by the fundamental principles of equality. We must also add that transgender communities are also entitled to an affirmation of gender autonomy. Our cultural prejudices must yield to constitutional principles of equality, empathy and respect...Thus all the sexual identities, including sexual minorities, including transgender communities, are entitled to be totally protected." To change the current perceptions, the committee noted that it is important that children are imparted proper sexuality knowledge, "Children need to be able to access informed, non-prejudiced sources on sexuality. Challenging the perception of sexuality as being purely heterosexual is an ongoing agenda for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) activism and for counter-socialisation efforts. Collaborating or networking with LGBT activists is a beginning to understanding different sexuality experiences."

The committee recommended recognizing other forms of sexual assaults apart from penile-vaginal penetration, punishing police personnel who refuse to register complaints of victims,

and most importantly, used the word 'person' while describing about sexual assault, whereas describing rape as being committed by a man on another person; thus bringing even transgender victims and victimized men under its ambit.

However, the Govt. while preparing the Bill to be presented in the Parliament, chose to retain the word 'woman' instead of 'person' while describing rape, thus effectively shutting the door of legal justice for innumerable number of people, especially transgender victims, who undergo the trauma but have no means of seeking justice. The Criminal Amendment Bill 2013 was passed by the Parliament and signed into a law by the President recently,

**What is good to see is that the debate is moving out of Sec 377... There is interest being shown by State level bodies. All these are happy developments**

leaving in despair a vulnerable minority who had hoped for seeking justice if the recommendations were accepted and implemented by the Govt. The Govt. has also remained silent on the other aspects of the report which talked about imparting correct sexuality education to children and other educational reforms that would actually go a long

way in changing perceptions in the future generations.

Madhu says she underwent SRS so that she doesn't have to face such police apathy again. But not everyone is privileged enough to undergo the costly operation. However, Pawan believes that not everything is as gloomy as it may seem, "Over all there is at least acknowledgement of violence faced by transgenders. What is good to see is that the debate is moving out of Sec 377, for transgenders at least. There is interest being shown by State level bodies. All these are happy developments. Beyond the law on paper, these are the kind of developments that actually matter."



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# THE AVERAGE HOMOSEXUALS' JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE & EQUALITY

BHARATHI EXPLAINS WHY OBAMA'S MENTION OF STONEWALL AND GAY RIGHTS IN HIS INAUGURATION SPEECH IS HISTORIC.



WE, THE PEOPLE, DECLARE TODAY THAT THE MOST EVIDENT OF TRUTHS - THAT ALL OF US ARE CREATED EQUAL - IS THE STAR THAT GUIDES US STILL, JUST AS IT GUIDED OUR FOREBEARS THROUGH SENeca FALLS, AND SELMA, AND STONEWALL.

— PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA, SECOND INAUGURAL SPEECH, JANUARY 21, 2013.

Every member of the LGBT community who was watching this all over America, including me felt a shock. Gay rights activist and even the most progressive liberals were astounded when President Barack Obama on his second inaugural day, uttered the word Stonewall in the same breath as Selma and Seneca falls. To understand why this was historic, some of us need a quick lesson in the civil rights battle of America.

Seneca falls, New York is considered to be the birthplace of women rights movement. This is where in the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century women started fighting against oppression and demanded equal rights including the right to vote. It took decades for them to finally earn those rights.

Selma, Alabama is the place where African American's civil rights movement reached a new height in 1965. It became a movement which brought to light the likes of Martin Luther King Jr. and many other civil rights leaders. Then came the Washington march where King gave the historic "I have a dream" speech and it followed some years later with the passage of the civil rights bill, protecting them from discrimination and giving them equal voting rights.

These were the significant moments which fueled the fight against oppression and discrimination. So was Stonewall.

Stonewall Inn is a gay bar in Christopher street, downtown New York. For a long time it was illegal for bars to serve alcohol to gays. It was illegal for even two men to dance together in a bar not to mention holding hands or kissing. So police used to raid the gay bars any time they wanted and just used to beat up gays and arrest them. In 1969, June 28 around 3 AM in the morning when the police came to harass gays like always, something unexpected happened.

The gays fought back. All the pent up fury, all the discrimination, humiliation and injustice which they had endured came out and the stonewall riots started. The whole of

America realized the fact that even the so called weak outlaws of the society can someday fight back. The level of hatred and homophobia was so high that even the media covered the riots with arrogance and insensitivity. The New York Daily News in 1969 wrote an article with the headline- **Homo Nest Raided, Queen Bees Are Stinging Mad.**

Even in this hate filled environment, the Stonewall uprising went on for weeks. This is considered to be the start of the gay rights movement. There was a march organized on the one year anniversary of the riots in New York, which later on became the Gay Pride Parades which are now conducted all over the world.

Religious people and other homophobes are still saying that being gay is a choice. They have said that gay people are not born this way instead they have chosen to commit sin. So their(gays) fight is not a civil rights issue, as compared to African Americans who were born black. (Not to mention they opposed everyone who were fighting for their God given equal rights while shamelessly using God's name.)

Well the argument can go on but the effect is lost now. By equating Stonewall with Seneca Falls and Selma; President Obama affirmed the nation that gay rights is a civil rights issue. By equating Stonewall with those two pivotal civil rights movements in the history of America he has made sure that he and the majority of Americans believe that the LGBT community is fighting for their civil rights. But he didn't stop with that. He went one step further. Something no President has ever done.

*"Our journey is not complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law – for if we are truly created equal, then surely the love we commit to one another must be equal as well."*

I had tears in my eyes when he said that and I wasn't alone. Every single member of the LGBT community was moved beyond words. The tears were a testimony to our earning for acceptance. Those were not just words but an acknowledgement by a leader towards a

community which is ostracized, demonized and still treated as second class by the majority.

He made history. These words will be quoted for generations to come.

Inaugural addresses are the stuff made for history books. Similar to Franklin D. Roosevelt's "*the only thing we have to fear is fear itself*" or John F. Kennedy's, "*ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country*". President Obama's monumental statements will be read by the future generations. He pledged that every American and every human being all over the world has to understand that gay men are created equal and they deserve every right under the law which is bestowed upon their heterosexual counterparts. Their love and commitment is as sacred as anyone else's. He uttered the word gay in an inaugural address for the first time. He had selected an openly gay Latino poet to narrate the inaugural poem and a pastor who included gay people during his prayers on that day. Any leader who is gay friendly usually just name checks or refers to the gay community in an obscure way on a national platform, because they used to think it will make people uncomfortable. Never has someone spoken out so strongly for the LGBT community and their rights and has vowed to fight for it on this scale. I strongly believe that this wouldn't be a last time a President will address the gay community on this scale. But Obama is the first to have done what future leaders are going to do.

In 1967, two years before Stonewall, CBS a national television addressed homosexuality as a documentary titled THE HOMOSEXUALS in its popular documentary show '60 minutes'. It started with the anchor reporting,

*The average homosexual, if there be such, is promiscuous. He is not interested or capable of a lasting relationship like that of a heterosexual marriage. His sex life, his love life, consists of a series of one-chance encounters at the clubs and bars he inhabits.*

*And even on the streets of the city — the pick-up, the one night stand, these are characteristics of the homosexual relationship.*

That was the first time the American Public was given a glimpse of the so called 'homosexual lifestyle'. That was the first time people were made aware of the existence of gays. It was so prejudiced that LGBT activists recently called it as the "the single most destructive hour of antigay propaganda in our nation's history."

The one hour documentary which was supposed to educate the public about homosexuals, ended with these lines.

*The dilemma of the homosexual: told by the medical profession he is sick; by the law that he's a criminal; shunned by employers; rejected by heterosexual society. Incapable of a fulfilling relationship with a woman, or for that matter with a man. At the center of his life he remains anonymous. A displaced person. An outsider.*

Today Anderson Cooper, an openly gay man is one of the anchors of that same 60 minutes show, which branded the likes of him as a displaced outsider. It's hard to imagine that 40 years ago this was telecast on a national television and this was the opinion of the majority of American Public. Not to mention it is still the opinion among the Indian public.

But I have hope. As President Obama said, change doesn't happen because of Washington or politicians. It happens because ordinary people who had the courage to fight against all odds. I have hope that it won't take another 40 years for an Indian Prime Minister to stand on a national platform to speak for our rights. Because we, the ordinary gays and lesbians, will bring the fight to the society, we will fight the prejudice, we will shatter the myths and we will educate the public. As Harvey milk once said, "If they get to know us, they can never hate us." We will make sure that they know us. You and me, we will bring equality and justice.

# THE TERROR IS REAL!!!

SEX IS FUN, BUT NOT AT THE RISK OF GETTING INFECTED...

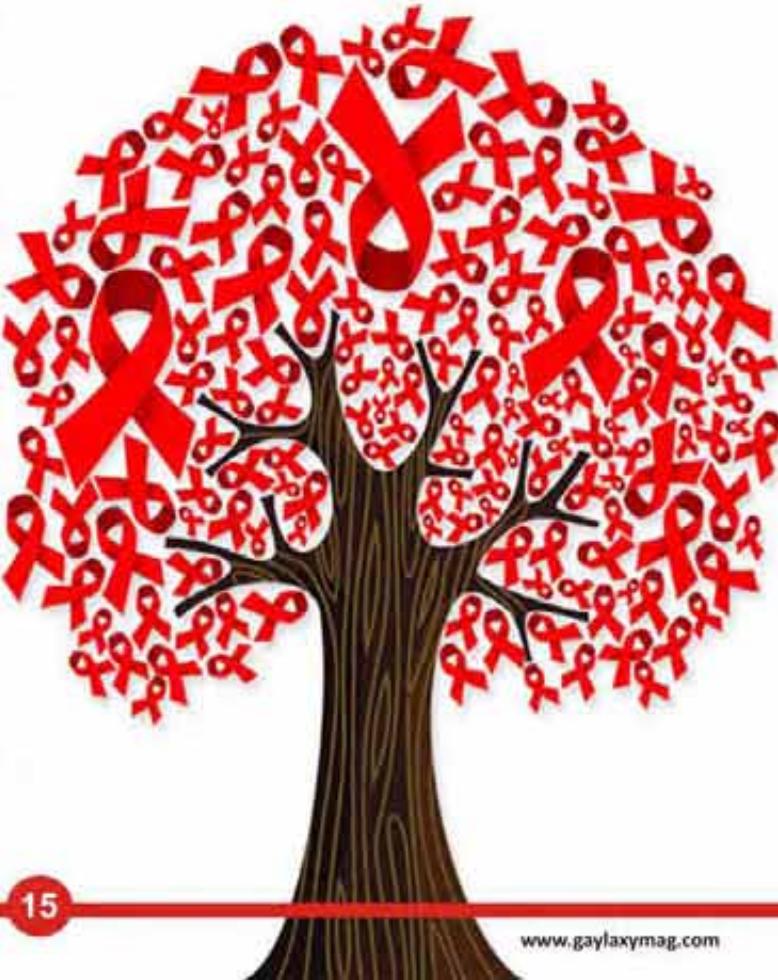
A LITTLE DILIGENCE MIGHT SAVE A LOT OF REGRET LATER, WRITES MANPREET SINGH

It all starts with a ping, a message, or an IM on a social-networking site. Apparently a hot guy asks you out. You meet for coffee, you find him cute, he finds you adorable, and so on a much awaited "Friday night", one takes the other to his "place". You insist you will just talk or perhaps only kiss, but soon one thing leads to another, and then raw instincts take over. But wait, in all the haste, none remembered to get a condom. But who cares, right? The only thing on the mind is the hot, naked guy next to you.

The series of incidents described above, as trite as they may seem, pose a grave danger to one's health every time one makes that "one" risky decision. Although one may formulate a plethora of arguments for or against the moral roller-coaster your sub-conscious goes through after a quick carnal satiation, the one thing that is absolute is that the danger involved in un-protected sex is real. Studies and surveys have proven time and again, without failing, that gay/bisexual men are amongst the major risk group when it comes to HIV infection, owing to the highly vulnerable so-called quick fling lifestyle, and rampant drug-use, involving sharing needles amongst other reasons. What is alarming is that despite receiving loads of information about the dangers of un-protected sex, despite awareness campaigns, despite the efforts of NGO's, unprotected sex is highly prevalent amongst queer men. What is even more disturbing is that, most of these "couples" do not care two hoots about using protection. After all, according to them AIDS happens to others, right? Why bother for protection? After all, sex is fun, sex is available. Most fail to realize the magnitude of the risk they are putting themselves at. Most fail to realize that AIDS is real, AIDS does happen to people, good or bad, it happens to people around you, it can happen to you if you do not use protection.

Another disturbing fact is that most of the queer men are hesitant when it comes to getting themselves tested. The trend is same, whether one considers the typical metro-sexuals, or the ones living in rural areas. People do not "bother" getting tested. However, the ugly truth is that if you are already infected, an awareness of the same might at least prevent you from passing it on to someone else. So much for the greater good.

Life is a precious gift. Yes, sex is fun, but not at the risk of getting infected. So, the next time you have that urge of letting your hair-down, sipping on a Cosmopolitan or vodka or even plain old coffee with a cute stranger, carry a condom. And yes, be bold enough to get yourself tested, after all you are bold enough to go play. A little diligence might save a lot of regret later, even a life. Think about it.



# WE ARE FAMILY

**Sachin Jain** writes about the 14th GayBombay Parents and Relatives Meet held in Mumbai as part of the QAM week

The 14th GayBombay Parents and Relatives Meet, a part of the Queer Azaadi 2013 event line-up, was held on Sunday, January 20, 2013 at a venue called Liquid Lounge in Mumbai. In attendance were 6 parents and relatives, and 70 LGBT persons. Parents of LGBT persons have played a significant role in the social awareness about sexual minority rights that has grown in India by leaps and bounds since the 2009 Delhi High Court judgement decriminalizing homosexuality between consenting same-sex adults in private. The objective of the meet was

to provide a safe, non-judgemental space for parents and relatives of LGBT persons to meet each other, share their experiences, and build and offer support networks, both to other parents dealing with issues related to the alternate sexuality of their children, or to such children looking for ways to reach out to their parents about this.

The highlight of this parents meet was the completely unorthodox path taken by veteran facilitator of these meets, Umang. This time, he started with 6 role plays enacted by him and various other parents. In these he addressed



all the common questions asked by parents when their children came out. The first one was a moving exploration of how an Indian son searches for ways and terms to explain his sexuality to his perplexed traditional parent. It touched upon attraction, sex, love, marriage and psychiatry. Denial, ignorance, fear, anger, secrecy showed up in the parental reactions, beautifully enacted by Mrs Shobha Doshi. Another was of a modern mother: she thinks her son is not ready for marriage because he does not want to take responsibility. One of our regular attendees, Mrs. Sarojini Dash, who is also a psychiatrist, played the role of one, and allayed the fears of the parent. "It's a question of educating society," she said in the course of the conversation. "We have seen so many gay people, who achieve very much, and they have positive characteristics that help them to reach top of their professions and they are respected in society very much."

The remaining role plays had Mrs. Doshi meeting other parents. Umang also narrates wonderful anecdotes about each parent, their stories of coming out as parents of gay persons and how they have been involved in and contributed to the LGBT community.

"The purpose of having this unconventional start was to change the predictable pattern of the meetings," said Umang. "The role plays also serve as templates for

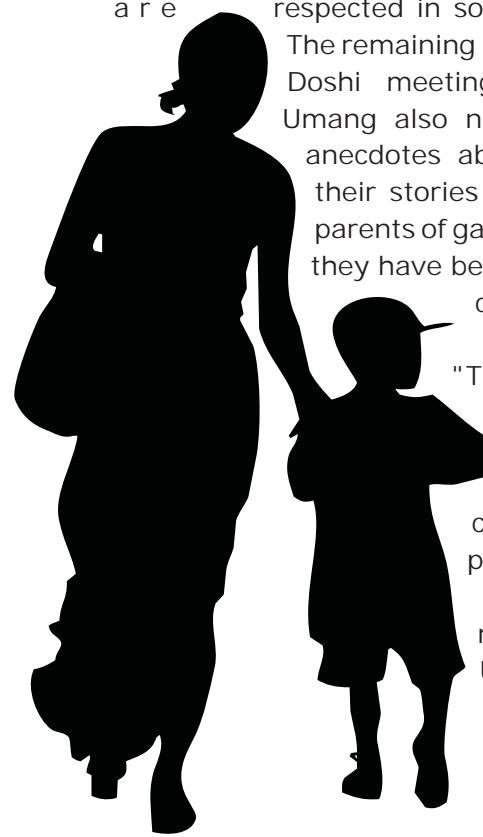
LGBT persons seeking clues about how to hold conversations with their parents about their sexuality."

The gathering held a minute's silence in memory of Mrs. Jalnawala, proud mother of Peshdad, and a veteran of many parents meets. She passed away a few months ago. The group appreciated and remembered the mixture of fondness and firmness with which she supported Peshdad who could not attend because he is out of the country.

The transformative effect this meeting has on those still coming to terms with their sexuality has to be seen to be believed. A first-timer to such a meet, Roger, said "I indeed was totally focussed and ensured that I did not miss a single uttered word." Even for those who have reached a stage of comfort and empowerment vis-a-vis their relationship with their parents about their sexuality, attending such a meet reinforces their feeling of solidarity with the community and appreciation for the journey that both they and their parents have taken.

One of the attendees, Priyank wrote after the meeting saying, "My father, mother and brother never had an issue with me being a homosexual man right from the day when I came out to them 17 years back.....it were just the relatives who made things hell. Today is not Mother's Day....but just wanted to say "I love you Mom"....because she is searching for a suitable alliance (groom) for me.....she wants to attend the GB parents meet too sometime soon..! Jai ho to all the Mothers...!" Speaking about her son Harish, Mrs. Iyer said, "After he came out to me, I see a lot of change in him. Earlier he didn't have a single friend, now I have to curb his friendships, stop him from talking on the phone all the time. Now he is very confident, and his confidence is soaring."

The parents and relatives also talked about how these meets have changed their



## The parents meets send a very strong statement to the authorities: We don't have an issue with our child being gay, why do you?



Picture: Balachandran Ramiah

Umang in conversation with parent Mrs. Shobha Doshi at the GayBombay Parents and Relatives Meet, a Queer Azaadi 2013 event

own lives. Mrs. Harwant Kaur, who has opened her home and heart to GB meetings, whereby hundreds of young gay men have received her support, solace and advice, always delivered with humour and chutzpah. She said: "I've met so many young gay men who give me so much love and affection. I don't have children of my own and you all compensate for that." There was a very nice unstructured interaction between parents and the LGBT community during the tea and snacks break, when young men nervously walked up to the parents to ask questions they were too afraid to ask in front of others.

However there was also some development areas in these meets, pointed out by Mayuresh, who has been bringing his parents for these meets for many years. "In my opinion the purpose of the event is fulfilled even if a few folks are inspired or helped in their coming out process. However, I would have liked to see more participation from parents. There were only 6 parents and relatives of

which 5 were women and all had accepted their gay children. Also, the majority of the audience had already come out in varying degrees. I wonder if there is anything we can do to encourage more parents to attend, such as smaller and localized meets, etc."

The meets also inspire gay men to see role models for their parents, and gives them a roadmap to structure their coming out process or to involve their parents in the LGBT worlds, as often, the familial world and the LGBT world remain insulated from each other for even the most 'out' LGBT persons and 'out' parents. As Nikhil said, "I'd have brought my parents if I was in town." One of the organizers, Balachandran Ramiah, also connected the dots between the parental support and a challenges that the LGBT community faces in contemporary society: "The parents meets send a very strong statement to the authorities: We don't have an issue with our child being gay, why do you?"



# IN SOLIDARITY WITH MUDASIR

**Andy Stephen Silveira** writes about the events that led to Mudasir's suicide on EFLU, the various aspects of the case and the lessons we ought to learn



**T**he death of Mudasir Kamran, a PhD student of the English and Foreign Languages University, on March 02, 2013, is a very unfortunate event. Since his death there has been a strong uproar on the part of the student struggle, which protested against the administration's insensitive and totalitarian behaviour.

While it is impossible to state the exact reasons for the suicide, some things stand out. The suicide could have been prevented, had the administration been sensitive in dealing with Mudasir. What we infer from reports and personal testimonies is that Mudasir and Waseem were 'close friends' and roommates in Pune and Hyderabad. When the two were not together Mudasir would question Waseem by asking, "Where were you?" and "With whom were you with?" Over time, Waseem became uncomfortable with Mudasir's possessiveness and tried to distance himself from Mudasir. This disturbed Mudasir and it also led to physical fights between the two when others intervened and had to separate them.

This relationship between the two did not have a name, and they definitely did not acknowledge it as a homosexual relationship. Given the pervasive homophobia in our societies and academic institutions, where homosexuals are still looked down upon, naming the relationship only riddles it with discomfort. In Mudasir's case, we see an overlapping of his religious, Kashmiri and possibly queer identities, which position this 'relationship' on uncertain grounds, when considering aspects of the private and the personal, love and friendship, admonishment

and violence.

On the night of the incident, Mudasir and Waseem had another altercation. When Waseem reported it to the Proctor, the latter asked the police to arrest him on the grounds that he was "mentally disordered". When some students got to know of these events they went to the Police Station. On seeing the students, Mudasir broke into tears, exclaiming, "Mein pagal hoon kyaa?" (I am mad or what?) It was a group of students and the Warden of the Hostel, who wrote a letter at the Police Station stating that it was an issue internal to the University.

The debate about causes of Mudasir's death has different versions. One is about him being a Kashmiri nationalist who was tortured by the police, while another foregrounds his Muslim identity. A number of people have expressed strong discomfort at acknowledging any aspect of Mudasir's putative queerness while engaging with the issue. Some have even considered referring to his feelings for Waseem as an attempt to tarnish Mudasir's name.

At this point in time, what is important is how the different aspects of this case are represented and discussed. If we suppress critical elements of this case by refusing to engage with the possibilities of Mudasir's queerness in a non-homophobic manner, we fail to learn from this unfortunate death, and become limited in our abilities to strategize for responding to similar issues and prevent future tragedies. And this becomes one of the myriad deaths which happen due to the callousness of individuals and institutions.

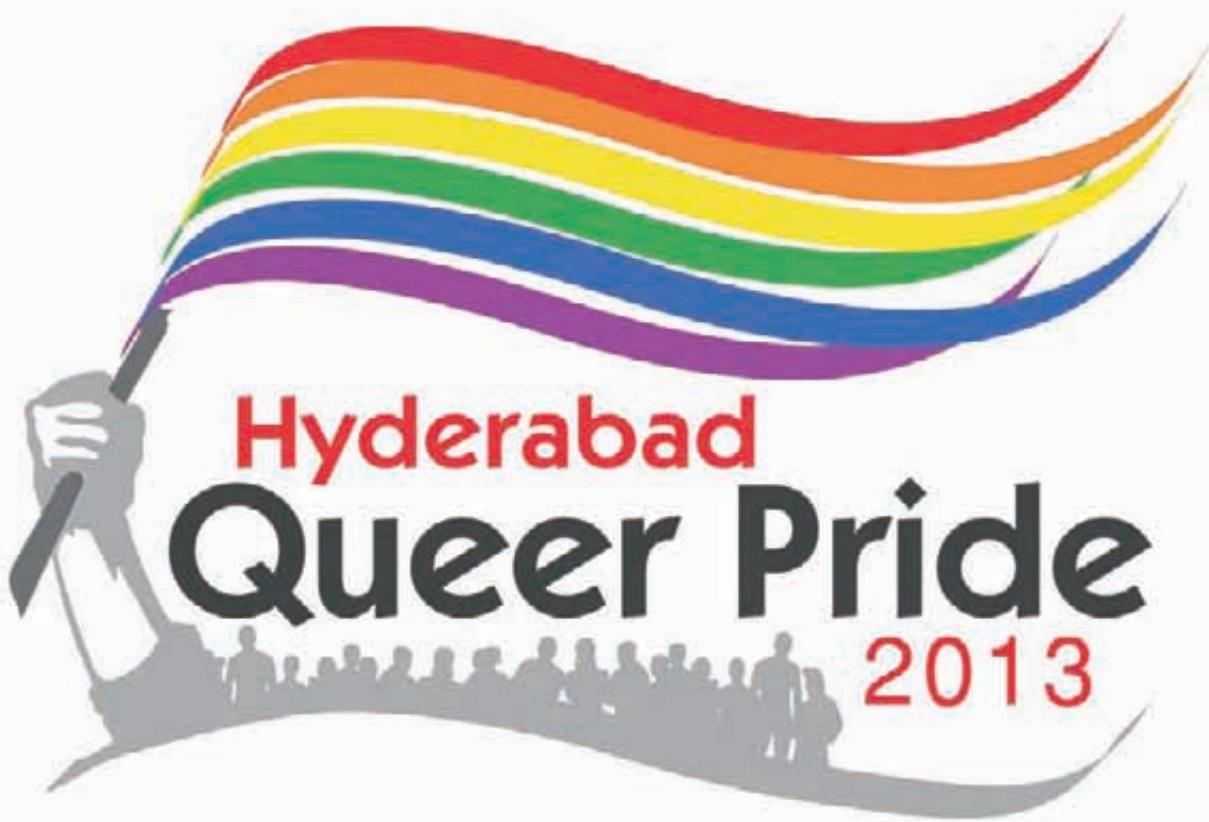


Mudasir's death teaches us that our sexuality is much more fluid than we think. While engaging with queerness, it no longer is an aspect located Outside, or foreign to one's

context, but it locates itself in the very place one inhabits. Moving forward, we insist that the university engage with sexuality issues in an inclusive manner, refuse to allow responses to similar student crises to be colored by institutional homophobia, and offer therapeutic rather than punitive responses to such issues. Such change is essential to prevent future deaths and enable

students pursue their academic goals in the knowledge that all aspects of themselves are welcome and affirmed on campus.

Fortunately some students and queer groups in Hyderabad have shown their solidarity, in protesting against the homophobia of the administration, and urged for the need to engage with LGBT issues on campus. We seek your support in signing a [petition](#) in seeking an impartial inquiry in the death of Mudasir Kamran.



**Chanakya** writes about Hyderabad's first pride

**Hyderabad to witness its first gay pride parade this year**

July 24, 2012 | TNN

**HYDERABAD:** The city is expected to have its first gay pride march this year. The event is slated to be held by the end of 2012 with the cooperation of various LGBTQI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex) groups working out of Hyderabad. While deliberations on the same are on, organisers of the event say that they have various security aspects to look into. The announcement has come at a time when various sexual minority communities are holding programmes to...

**Hyderabad's pride parade in jeopardy**

September 23, 2012 | Karthik Pasupule , TNN

The city police has not yet given its nod to a gay pride walk, scheduled for October 16. The Hyderabad Police might just play spoil sport by denying permission for the Hyderabad Pride Parade, the first ever Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex (LGBTQI) Pride Parade in the city. Several city based LGBTQI collectives were planning to jointly organise this event scheduled to take place on October 14. They were however, in for a shock when the cops denied them permission on...

Searching for Hyderabad Queer Pride March on Google, I used to get this kind of news for many days. It was very disappointing that people of Hyderabad were not supporting this great event. And finally after a lot of efforts, struggle, support and dedication, the long awaited event and pioneer moment in Hyderabad happened with a bang. It was the moment when every person attended for the single cause of celebrating being oneself and was proud of each and every person present there.

*'It was a carnival atmosphere. Clad in gaudy costumes, sporting bright masquerade masks and wearing over the top make-up, the city's Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community came out into the open and poured onto the Necklace Road stretch,'* wrote The Hindu.



"Do I look like a criminal? No, but according to IPC 377, I am a criminal because same-sex is criminal. The Supreme Court should give a favourable judgement and decriminalise same-sex between consenting adults. This will also pave the way for same-sex marriages," said G. Krishna of Suraksha Society.

Several LGBT members from Mumbai, Bangalore, Pune and Delhi also turned-up. "Worldwide, gay community is being recognised but here discrimination still exists. The younger generation, however, are a lot more accommodative and understanding. Such rallies give us a platform to make public aware of our needs," said Aarif Shaikh, General Secretary, Sarathya, an NGO working for LGBT in Bangalore.

Some of the posters held by them screamed for attention. 'I love my boyfriend and can't wait to marry him. Same sex marriage is everybody's right', declared one poster. Another placard announced 'Gay by Birth, Proud by Choice', while another said 'Gay and Lesbians Make Great Bosses'.

All the people were shouting slogans like 'I am Gay and it is okay', 'Gay Hua toh kya Hua? Pyar Hua ikarar Hua'. The police and media were very supportive.

I Thank Krishna Naidu and Suraksha Society team for organizing such an incredible event. Thank you Heroes Project for supporting and being there for whatever that was needed to be done. Thanks Wajood for organizing food, water and bringing energy and colours to the event. I congratulate and convey my regards to Darpan Foundation, Desiboyz, Saathi and all the great performers on and off stage for their immense efforts.

Also lastly, I thank all the people that came and supported the event and were responsible for sending the right message to the world and in a right way.

# THROUGH JEFF'S LENS

An American student is in India and filming various LGBT artists, **Tanika Godbole** finds out more

Jeff Roy, who is a PhD student in ethnomusicology at the University of California, Los Angeles, is currently in Mumbai studying the music and dance practices of the LGBTQ community in India. Jeff received Fulbright-mtvU Fellowship to stay in India for a year, in order to make a documentary film 'Music in Liminal Spaces: Gendered Performance in India's LGBTQ Communities'.

Jeff is one of the four grantees to have been selected for the year 2012 for the prestigious Fulbright-mtvU programme. The programme awards individuals with projects that explore the use of music as a base of mutual understanding between cultures. His project was given its stamp of approval by the pop

stars Foster the People, B.o.B, J.Cole and Diplo, as well as the Presentially-appointed J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

He has been filming his current project for over four months now and has worked extensively with various LGBTQ artists from across the country. Roy filmed Prince Manvendra Singh Gohil of Rajpipla, Gujarat-the first person of royal heritage to speak openly about his orientation. He has also interviewed Alisha Batth, a popular Indian singer/songwriter, who performed in the CokeStudio-MTV India concert series. Until July 2013, interviews and concerts will be posted on the Fulbright-mtvU [website](#). The





footage and edited videos will also be used in the development of a feature documentary at the end of his stay in India.

This isn't Jeff's first documentary. His first film, 'Rites of Passage', also known as 'Mohammed to Maya', received the Special Jury Award for Best Documentary at the 3rd Kashish – Mumbai International Queer Film Festival in 2012. The film received four more awards and appeared at fifty other film festivals around the globe. The feature-length version, 'Mohammed to Maya', premiered at the Montréal World Film Festival in August 2012, and continues to screen in competition at other international film festivals.

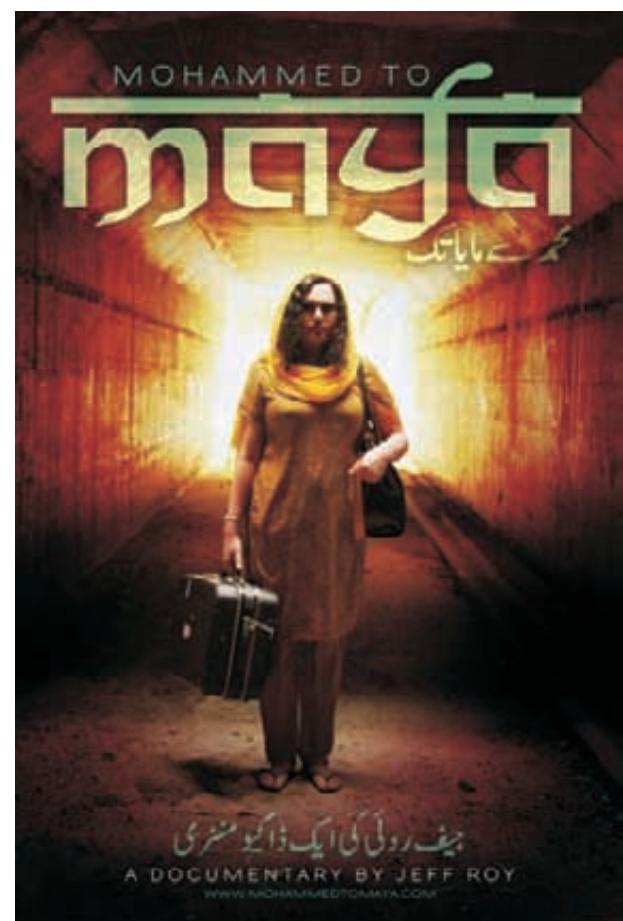
'Mohammed To Maya' traces the journey of Maya Jafer, a Muslim from Tamil Nadu, who traveled to Thailand for her sex-change operation. The film covered her entire physical transition from male to female, as well as her spiritual transition.



Jeff's purpose for making the film was to show what Maya was feeling through her transition. "My goal was to forgo a conventional message of affirmation, in order to convey Maya's journey with frankness and realism," Roy explains. "I wanted to strengthen the emotional impact and to engage the audience with a narrative that builds empathy for Maya."

With these two documentaries, Jeff demonstrates his commitment to open people's eyes about the real issues that LGBTQ individuals face in India and around the world. "The beauty of the LGBTQ community is that it transcends national, ethnic, and, religious boundaries. We are all one family. This is what I try to communicate through my films. I want my work to serve as a bridge between cultures," he adds.

For more information about the film 'Mohammed to Maya', visit the film website: <http://www.MohammedToMaya.com>.



# Mumbai Pride 2013

More than 1000 people marched in Mumbai on 2nd Feb demanding gay rights in India.



















India's Biggest  
**QUEER**  
Film Festival

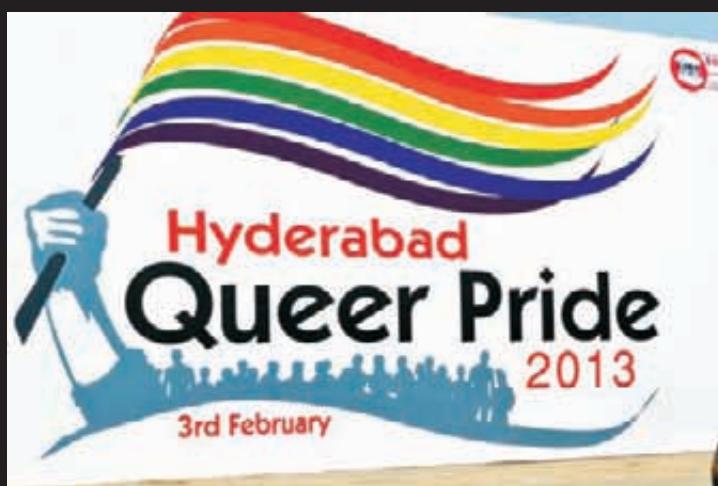
*Kashish*  
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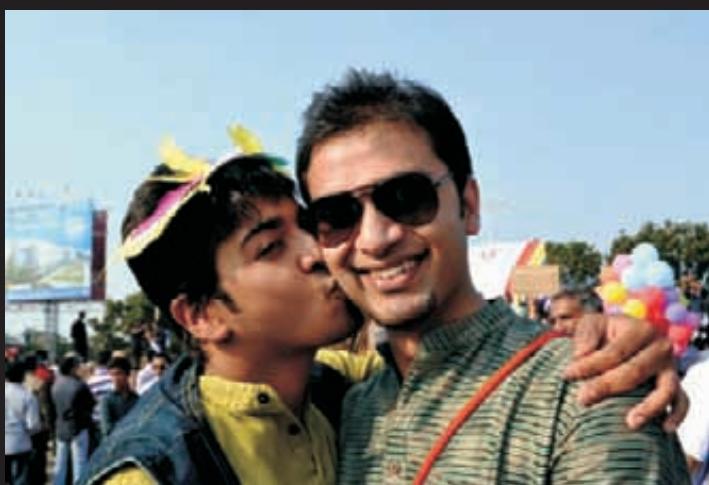
**TOWARDS  
CHANGE**

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**Date**  
May 22-26, 2013

# HYDERABAD QUEER PRIDE

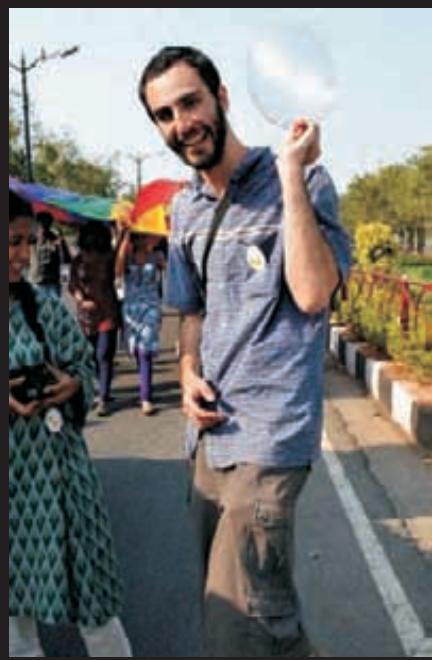
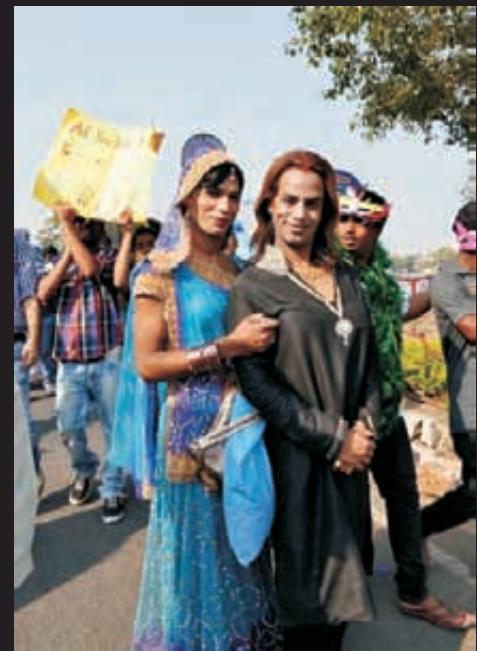
Hyderabad held its first pride march on 3rd February. **Rajib Mukherjee** captured moments from the march

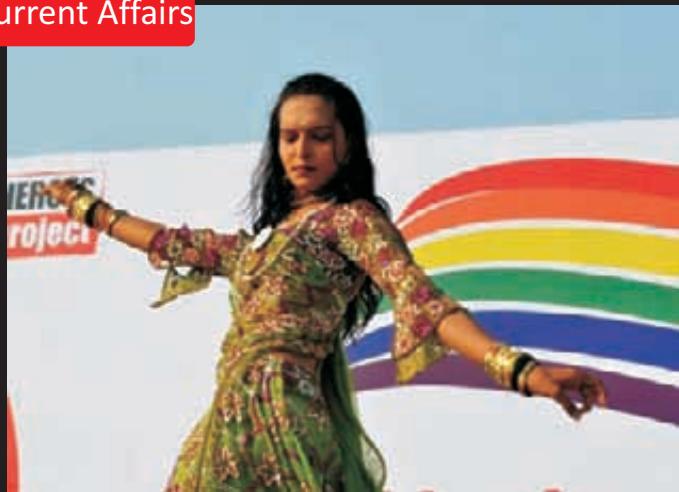












# WHEN AN EVALUATION GOES ALL WRONG

....HEAR BOTH SIDES OF THE STORY BEFORE YOU COUNSEL A FRIEND ON HIS/HER RELATIONSHIP,  
ADVISES ROHAN NORONHA.

AJMAL COMES DOWN TO YOUR CITY TO SPEND A LOVELY HOLIDAY, PRIOR TO THAT, YOU AND HE HAVE BEEN BEST ONLINE BUDDIES. YOU BOTH WERE 'DATING ONLINE', BUT YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS AHEAD. AJMAL IS THIS SO CALLED SUAVE DUDE, AND AN APPLE OF EVERYONE'S EYE AROUND. YOU'RE MUCH ELDER TO HIM AND YOU LOVE HIM TRULY, MADLY AND DEEPLY. NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, THERE ARE LONG TALKS OVER PHONE, SKYPE AND MANY OTHER WAYS. YOU FINALLY MEET HIM AND THE JOURNEY BEGINS.

WHILE THE HOLIDAY IS ON, THE TWO OF YOU ARE COMPLETELY ALOOF FROM THE REAL WORLD. YOUR FRIENDS THINK YOU ARE IGNORING THEM; SOME EVEN GO AHEAD AND BLOCK YOU ON VARIOUS SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES CITING THE SAME. THE HOLIDAY IS HALF WAY THROUGH, AND A MISUNDERSTANDING HAPPENS. ONE OF THE FRIENDS WHO BLOCKED YOU GETS IN TOUCH WITH AJMAL, WHO IS A MUTUAL FRIEND TO THE TWO OF YOU. WHEN AJMAL GETS BACK HOME AFTER THE HOLIDAY, THE TWO OF THEM CONNECT. THEY TALK ABOUT THE MISUNDERSTANDING AND AJMAL IS TOLD THAT HE BROUGHT THIS ON HIMSELF.

WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE HIM? HE FEELS HORRIBLE, GUILTY, AND STARTS EVALUATING WHAT HE DID AND WENT THROUGH. HE STOPS TALKING TO YOU THE WAY HE USED TO, AND LOSES COMPLETE FAITH AND TRUST IN YOU. YOU ON THE

*It's been a long time  
since I wrote anything,  
and must I write today?*

*Yes!*

*Why should I write?  
I write because I am  
able to express better,  
and if I am able to  
express well, I can  
help you, my lovely  
readers, with your  
issues.*

*So let's talk about  
evaluations in a  
relationship, shall we?*

OTHER HAND HAVE NO CLUE THAT THIS PLOT IS BEING COOKED, OH GOD WHY!! YOU CALL AJMAL, HE IS NONCHALANT ABOUT YOUR TALKS, ABOUT YOU AS A PERSON AND CERTAINLY ISN'T INTO YOU THE WAY HE WAS. YOUR LIFE IS SLOWLY CRUMBLING BEFORE YOUR OWN EYES, AND YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.

NEXT STEP, YOU HEAD TO MEET AJMAL IN HIS CITY, HE ASKS YOU TO STAY OVER AT HIS PLACE, UNWILLINGLY THOUGH. YOU THINK OF IT AS PATCH UP TIME, BUT THE TRUE COLORS COME OUT, HE IGNORES YOUR PRESENCE, YOU FEEL ALIENATED, YOU WALK OUT. AJMAL IS FURIOUS AND THINKS YOU TWO CAN NEVER BE ONE ANYMORE. HE HAS FORGOTTEN ALL THE PROMISES OF LOVE ONCE MADE OVER NIGHTLY TALKS. THE FUTURE PLANS, THE KIDS TO ADOPT, THE LOVEMAKING SESSIONS, THE TRUST AND FAITH HE ONCE HAD IN YOU. AND THE BIGGEST PROMISE OF ALL, "NO MATTER WHAT, I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU." AJMAL HAS FORGOTTEN IT ALL.

YOUR LIFE IS SHATTERED, YOU COME BACK HOME. WITH A HOPE IN YOUR HEART YOU WRITE TO HIM, HE BLAMES YOU FOR NOT UNDERSTANDING THE SILENCE IN HIS EYES, THE EMOTIONS HE GOES THROUGH, HE BLAMES YOU FOR EVERYTHING. YOU CANNOT TAKE IT ANYMORE, YOU CALL IT QUIT TOO. YOU BOTH MOVE ON, OR HAVE YOU?

#### MORAL OF THE STORY:

IF YOU KNOW A COUPLE GOING THROUGH A ROUGH RIDE IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP, IT'S BEST TO HEAR THEM OUT ON BOTH SIDES AND THEN COUNSEL. DON'T BREAK THEM UP BY MAKING THEM FEEL GUILTY OF THE SITUATION THEY ARE IN, YOU CERTAINLY ARE NOT HELPING!!

# Where Flowers Bloom

Thinking of having your own garden? **Anuj Arya** gives you ideas to design your garden...

So we have given you around three main ideas, now let's provide you with some tips on how to work less and yet have a beautiful garden.

We all love taking care of our gardens, but in this rat raced world where even twenty four hours seems less, maintaining a garden seems daunting and cumbersome. But with the help of scheduled planning, we can now use the best of our abilities to ensure that our gardens are well maintained and cared for. And the best part is, you don't have to spend too much time thinking of the same, so read on please;

## Instant effects work

The best way to get good ideas for garden design and results would be to use plants that don't take too long to grow and they wouldn't clutter or crowd the garden as well. Best plants species here you could use would be the passion flower and even potato vines. You could even use cordylines and phormiums, these are plants that are distinctive and create focal points where placed.

## Bring down the pruning habit

You need to cut back on the idea of pruning regularly, and for that choose plants which wouldn't demand too much of such care. Plants such as Mahonias, PittosporumTenuifolium, Ferns and Palms or even conifers work wonders. They have beautiful shapes, distinctive features and would manage themselves when placed in the garden.

## Perennial plants should be avoided

We must tell you that perennial plants are a nightmare to have, because you would have to spend a lot of time dividing them, staking and even deadheading them too. Some of them have low maintenance reputations, such as sedums, acanthus mollis, holly locks and even rudbeckias too. It's best if you use Osmanthus Delavayi and Choisya ternate, which are shrubs that flower and are sweet smelling.

## Stop watering the plants too much

This is a time consuming process and its best to have Mediterranean species of plants which can withstand the dry hot weather. Lavender would be nice to have, so would be rosemary, acanthus mollis, hollylocks and even petunias too.

## Bring down the need to weed

It takes a long time to completely get all the weeds out, so the best thing for maintenance would be to have bark chippings and even gravel stones applied, this would prevent weeds from gaining ground and spreading.

## Look after the soil

Easy ideas for garden design and maintenance would also include taking care of the soil. This is a weapon with which half the battle on maintaining the garden and its design would be won. Use as much of organic matter as possible. Try and make your own compost at home, or even leaf mould as well. This would allow the water in the soil to be where it should be and aeration too would be guaranteed.

## In conclusion

If you have liked our ideas for garden design and the maintenance tips we provided, start on making that magical paradise manifest in front of your own eyes. Get in touch with an expert if need be, but ensure the adventure in making that dream garden is relaxing and fun!!

# Confessions Of Another 'Mentally Deranged Homosexual'!

**Floyd Jones** narrates his experiences of encountering homophobia from the faculty, staff and students on EFLU and how many more Mudassir's could take the drastic step of suicide if things aren't handled sensitively on campus

Mudassir's case has got me thinking...is this the way my University thinks of me? That I am a "mentally deranged homosexual"? I am also a student on one of the EFLU campuses, and I have been reading up on this issue. So a fight happens, and a student gets called to the police station at night. Well, clearly this was the first fight ever in the history of EFLU because I cannot recall another incident where the police had to be involved in a fight between two former roommates. Why was the police involved even before Mudassir's parents had been informed about their son's alleged violent behaviours? Why hadn't he been sent for counseling if the Procter knew he was struggling with his orientation? And you say this isn't homophobia? BALLS I SAY!

Acknowledging the fact that the queer community exists clearly isn't enough. The Pride marches, the handful of films, and the meager gay characters on Indian TV have done nothing to change the attitude of the people about the whole issue.



EFLU Campus

When I joined the EFLU campus a year ago, I made the 'mistake' of telling my new roommate that I was gay. It happened a week later, when we were exchanging stories about our family and friends, and I told him I was dating a man. I am in a committed relationship, and in no way was making a pass on him. But trust me, his reaction was pretty comical. It was almost as though I had told him I want to make out with him. Needless to say, things got pretty awkward, and I requested for a change in rooms. By then this loudmouth had told the entire campus that I am gay. Also you should note that this particular loud-mouth opted for gender studies in his Masters. What he learnt there, God only knows!

By the grace of God I have a strong heart, and I have learnt to put up an instant shield over such rebukes. The things that I got to hear were disgusting, and perhaps the worst thing that I had to encounter was a graffiti that appeared on the walls of the toilet of my hostel. It read, "XXXXXXXX is a cocksucker". What surprised me the most was that the warden had been to the toilet a few hours before I had gone in, and of course had seen the writing. And yet, all he did was silently walk out. This is where the University needs to put a check on its attitudes and the mindset of its employees.

Tell me, why hadn't the warden done anything about it? I can see two explanations. Either he is the one who wanted to be my pimp, or he represents the staff of the University that does not wish to raise its voice against homophobia.

That indeed comes as a threat to my wellbeing. Am I part of an organization that clearly hates my existence and does not wish to do anything when my name is being dragged into the gutters by other students for no fault of mine? What was I to do when the person who is entrusted with the well being of all the outstation students is the very same person who ignores when one of his students is being bullied by homophobes?

All I could do is walk up to the wall, and spend an hour cleaning up the mess. I came to my room and cried. We all have our melting points, don't we? However a brave face we may put up, we break when the people we trust and respect, the people who are in positions of power choose to do nothing.

The issue of being homosexual on this campus of EFLU is a hushed up thing. No one voices out their support openly, and those who do are rebuked and made fun of by their peers. Somehow the faculty also has a very anti-gay stance. Our professor clearly chose to leave out Queer Theory in our Gender Studies class. When I asked him about it, he said, "Well, that you can manage on your own." Of course. Why was I not surprised?

I am not the only gay student in the hostel, and the others present there are facing equal harassment and bullying. They sometimes speak up, give written complains but nothing happens. The warden is very much aware of the bullying on campus, and yet chooses to do nothing. A few visiting faculty to the hostels have also seen and heard about the bullying, but even they choose to do nothing. One employee confided in me, "We as a University do not want to take a stance on LGBT issues." Instead of taking action on the bullies, one of



Students protesting in EFLU campus

the lecturers actually made us read a passage from the Bible that says the homosexuals must be burnt alive. Who then do we voice out our issues to?

**one of the lecturers  
actually made us read a  
passage from the Bible  
that says the  
homosexuals must be  
burnt alive**

At the end, all I can say is there are a lot many Mudassirs amongst us. How much longer can we endure this? We know the administration is aware of our situation, the employees know,

and yet they choose to do nothing. Even if the students, let's say, have come from conservative families and do not understand LGBT issues, why is the faculty silent on this? What good are their Ph.Ds and other qualifications if they cannot be sensitive towards queer students? We cannot risk going complaining in public. It will just confirm our identities as GAY, and just in case we die, all that the University will speak of us will be another mentally deranged homosexual died!

So then if EFLU cannot guarantee our wellbeing and our security, why take us in as students? The VC should include new criteria into the forms- "Straight\_\_? Queer\_\_? If queer then find some other place to study because we cannot guarantee your safety, nor can we be sensitive towards your issues. We also do not want to take a stance on LGBT issues...so straight students only."

# WHY WAS IT ME?

**Navchintan** writes about the other sufferer in his life of duality as a gay married man- his wife, and warns others from marrying unsuspecting girls

I am 36-year-old gay man who lived a closeted life until now. I have dreamed of men since I ever realized that I could dream. I was never attracted to women. I knew that I was unique. However, what I did not know was that this was an alternative reality. I got married to a woman, who was beautiful, talented, caring, smart and loving. I went on to hide myself deeper into the closet, trying to fit into the heterosexual world, venturing out to cruising places to satisfy the carnal desires once in a while. I had been living a dual-life filled with guilt and self loathing. Then life takes over as usual. I had 2 sweet children. The guilt of doing wrong stopped me from seeking out men and I immersed myself into work. I am now 10 years into the marriage. Shameless to say, I have not had sex with my wife more than 5-6 times in these 10 years. You may ask, "Did your wife tolerate it?" Yes, she did. She did question sometimes, but I had an excuse everytime. She was in love with

me and did not want to hurt me. Lack of sexual intimacy is a ground for divorce, but she did not do that.

It was a day in the breezy month of September, winter had not yet set in, I met this guy again over whom I had a crush 10 years ago before my marriage. The breezy evening, the hot espresso and the smiling face of this hot crush of mine in front of me, I was on cloud nine and realized that I was in love. A great feeling to be in. I was deep, really deep in love with this guy. I completely forgot that I had a family back home and that I am a married man with two kids. Nothing crossed my mind. I started courting this guy until he dumped me into the abyss by saying "I am straight" to my "I love you." Ha, heartbroken, I fell straight on the ground. I was so lovelorn. I was so depressed. I could not control my emotions. WHY ME??? WHY WAS IT ME GOD??? WHY DID YOU DO THIS TO ME???



I met a counselor, who was a godsend and helped me through my heart break and made me understand who I was and what my needs were as a human being. While dealing with my heartbreak, I was introduced to a great support group Good As You(GAY) Bangalore. Words will not be able to do justice if I have to say how helpful this group was to me. I started accepting myself. I made good friends and started living my life afresh.

This is not what I wanted to write about. "WHY WAS IT ME?" is about the other sufferer in my life of duality -- my wife.

A 32-year-old sweet, beautiful, intelligent, well-educated, loving girl, who got married to me 10 years ago with starry eyes, entering into wedded bliss, hoping for love-filled, fulfilling life with a loving and caring husband. She fell in love with me when we met for the first time. I was a very good actor, you see. She was in awe, especially, with all her friends and relatives praising her for such a great choice (I can say this about myself; I am always smiling, sweet looking, caring, loving and happy-go-lucky guy). She was blinded by the probable-Oscar-winning act of mine. Though I can take shelter by saying, "I was ignorant," but I for sure knew (and most people like me also know) that I should not be getting married to a woman.

I could continue my act for quite sometime without her suspecting. Then, I got a superb idea, I thought to myself, "If we have a baby, then she would get diverted to the caring of the child and the need to have sex would come down." With this brilliant thought, I was successful in a very brief time, and lo and behold, I was a dad. Being a father, the feeling was lovely to hold the child in my arm; it all felt right. I could convince myself that my decision to get married was right. I was a doting and caring father. My wife was again taken away by my father act. She fell in love with me all over

again. Once the child had grown up a little, she started looking for intimacy and sex. I took the shelter of working in nightshifts (thanks to the BPOs and ITES companies). I could pass off as being tired and stressed and hence not interested in having sex. Hats off to her, she has been really tolerant and bought my excuse. When she started to discuss about sex more often, then I thought, it was the time for the second child, and we discussed about it and yes, we had our second bundle of joy. This time, I over did the father act to cover up, and she fell, head-over-heels in love with me again. My wife got her tubes cut so that we can have sex without the fear of her getting pregnant. She wanted to be the best wife ever and satisfy me to the fullest extent. All this while, I knew that I cannot be what she wants me to be. There were nights of arguments about why we have such a bad sex life, and she suggesting me to visit an urologist to get myself checked.

During all this, my love affair that I had spoken about earlier, happened. When I came to terms with accepting who I was and that I could fall in love with a guy, I realized what my wife would have been going through. The heartbreak that I went through as the person I loved did not love me back; she also has been going through it. At least, the friend of mine whom I fell in love with did not waste 10 years of my life to tell me that things would not work out.

*What was I doing here? I have been denying her the basic human need of being loved and being in love. Is it right on my part? Doesn't she deserve to know the truth? Does she have to live without love only because she is married to me and that she has kids? Isn't it her right to lead a life of her choice? Can I not be concerned about her life as a friend at least? I do love her as a friend.*

I started thinking these questions. I realized that we are humans and we make mistakes, but we need to take responsibility of our mistakes



and try to be truthful and honest.

I realized that the only way that she would get answers to all her questions would be if she gets to know who I am. I took the support of my friends, Good As You, and my counselor and decided to come out to her.

I came out to her, and I know she is devastated, and we are still going through the process. I will write my coming out story again as that is not what I am trying to say in this story.

The purpose of me writing this is to throw light on the silent sufferer. I have been talking to gay guys around about what they think about getting married to a woman. There are many guys with a mindset that they should get married to a woman to satisfy their parents and relatives, and have sex with men outside. This thought itself is so derogatory towards women. These guys are not even considering what would happen to the women in these situations. I again feel that we are taking women for granted as we have been doing since ages. Women and their feelings are not respected in this country which idolizes women as Goddesses but do not treat their women well. I am turning feminist. A homosexual man marrying an unsuspecting straight woman is EQUIVALENT TO CHEATING. I know I am using a very strong word, but I strongly feel it is

true. I am a very kind human being, and I would not hurt anyone, but what did I do with my wife? I feel so frustrated looking at my wife's suffering.

None of us have any right to spoil someone else's life. We should take responsibility of our life and of others too.

I really hope someone who is reading this understands and makes a decision to not hurt a soul of an unsuspecting woman.

Let us be human. Let us love ourselves. Let us love others.

**PS:** In Bangalore, under the umbrella of Good As You and Swabhava, we have started an initiative to set up a support group for Married and Queer people (for all genders and orientation). This group meets every alternate Saturday at the Swabhava Office. This is a group for Married & Queer and people who are queer and are getting married heterosexually by force, choice or ignorance. To know more about this group you can visit the following links

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/goodasyoubir>  
<http://www.facebook.com/groups/GoodAsYouBlr>

# A DIFFERENT TRIBUTE

**Anirban** met Justin during Hyderabad Pride, whose special preparations for the pride left him amazed

I was looking for a break from work but was unable to find a suitable holiday destination. But when two pride marches were scheduled back to back in two of the most prominent cities in India, I was left to look into the innumerable options. After a lot of deliberations, I found Hyderabad to be the most feasible option. So here I was, off to attend the first ever Queer Pride March 2013 in Hyderabad.

I was well received by the host, Chanakya, who did his best as a host. At his place I met another Bangalorean, Justin. Justin is a call center executive in his early twenties. Though still not out of the closet, he has all the talents to give many renowned artists a run for their money. I found Chanakya's place strewn with paper cut-outs, dilapidated cassette tapes, glue and paint. I was wondering whether these were for the placards meant for the pride. But that thought quickly evaporated when Chanakya told me that from last night, Justin had been busy doing some mysterious stuff. Justin was actually busy preparing his costume, all he needed was a little time and seclusion. I eventually befriended him, wondering whether he was going to put something related to 'Statue of Liberty'.

"No," he replied promptly.

I was really getting curious by now. But when he started putting the words 'Lady Gaga' on a green colored linen cloth, I could somehow start figuring out what was in his mind.

"Actually I am a big fan of Lady Gaga. And this green colored cloth containing these words would add a Hyderabadi touch. You know Hyderabidis do have affection with green. But I am not doing anything drag," Justin quipped.

So here it was, a call center executive with one of the most innovative methods to express himself-'Lady Gaga adorned with a blue colored Vishnu Chakra in a Hyderabadi style'. I am also a follower of Lady Gaga but would have never thought like Justin.

"You know, I could have had these things done by a fashion designer. But how do you pay a tribute? I would never enjoy the charm if I don't do these things myself," the passionate enthusiast continued to remark.

But there were more things to follow. When we took an auto-rickshaw on our way to the venue, I could find Justin worried about his costume being not ready in time. So it was left for me to keep him motivated. The long shirred old soft-drink bottle caps all over his legs, each one of them painstakingly punched by iron nail and all of them knitted meticulously by a single thread, just added to that 'wow' factor. He did not bother about the resulting bruises from those sharp metallic caps.

Moments later he was the cynosure for the boisterous shutterbugs but that did not restrict him to proscribe them.

I later learned, he was the same person behind the widely reported, masked-mummy-man of Bangalore Pride 2012.

Wasn't it a real tribute without getting overwhelmed by even a touch of glamour?



# Let The Wedding Bells Ring!!

**Rohan Abhijit Singh** pitch for your support to gay marriages in India

**W**e are a group of eligible bachelors in monogamous, committed and loving relationships and are waiting for the auspicious day when we can get married. We seek your approval.

## The story so far

It takes twenty six years of silence, six months of rebellion and six days of dark celebrations to get six decades of betrayal. That is the life of an individual who is denied the right to marry the person of his choice (read: gender). Having the desire to be with the man of his dreams, every gay man in India from adolescence grows up fearing the day when his family would force him to marry a girl for a larger societal acceptance.

## What do the two individuals get?

The man ends up frustrated of living the "lie" and discontinues the relationship emotionally and obviously physically. The woman either

does not know the reason of her miseries at home or lives a life of denial.

## What do the families get?

1. Social acceptance of an unhappily married couple. (Is that what holy matrimony should be?)
2. A frustrated wife/ husband looking for a partner online.

## So why are gay marriages opposed in India?

For a moment, let us consider some of the reasons people give when opposing same-sex marriage. They say that this would promote homosexuality in the society and spoil the culture. But sexual preferences cannot be learnt or forced; it is an individual's nature. Having heterosexuals around for so many years has never inspired me to be what they say- straight. On the other hand, social acceptance of gay



relationships would prevent individuals from a lot of mental stress and despair.

Another major reason we hear is that a "gay marriage" is not natural. Well, let us point out here that in my opinion, marriage itself is not natural. Catching cold, having sex, eating food, birth and death are natural, whereas clothing, houses, rockets, TV sets are "not natural". We do not see marriage "occurring in nature". Marriage is a human norm created by some humans considering perhaps only the majority of population. The minority has ever since been ignored.

### Religiously speaking

Now some religious people might say that their religion is against gay sex or gay marriage. We typically stay away from religious arguments in order to not hurt anyone's religious sentiments, and being religious people ourselves it is expected from those who oppose me marrying my Love. However, we must mention that a reminder on what Krishna preached to Arjuna throughout the Bhagwat Gita- *to act according to his nature, both spiritually and materially. We all have been made by Nature, unique in our own way, and a perfect harmony with the Mother Nature is achieved only when we act according to our individual nature. We feel right, things feel right.*

### Lawfully speaking

The modifications in the Section 377 of Indian Constitution allows me and my partner to live happily ever after without the fear of being accused of illegal gay sex, yet the desire to marry my Love remains impossible in this country so far. Legal acceptance of our sexuality is very different from the society not frowning upon us. Just like many people discourage live-in relationships keeping high the value of the

institution of marriage, homosexuals also respect the commitment of a beautiful relationship that they want to get through marriage. **We want to show the world that we are not just in a relationship for sex allowed by 377, we truly love the person and want to grow old with him. We want to raise kids and shower love to them just like any other unfortunately incapable couple does.**

### Why we stayed in India?

We could have flown abroad and married like many others we know did, but we choose to be in our beloved India and work to get our rights. At this stage, we need to gather support from You, yes YOU our friends, who have cared enough for us to read this far. There are many norms that have changed in our country over the years like the sati system, dowry and purdah. "Heterosexual-only marriage" is another such norm. Our country needs to discontinue this restriction in order to let all its citizens breathe free. We want you to be aware of the distress we go through when hiding our identity and understand that our

desire to be with the person of the same gender is natural and loving. We need our friends to speak in our favor next time someone talks of denying us our right to get married.

We are in a monogamous, committed and loving relationship and are waiting for the auspicious day when we can get married. We want a future safe and secure for our family and our society. Me, my loving husband, our children, parents and You, our dear neighbors.

### Join hands with us

We seek your approval. If you support us, you can show your approval by liking the Facebook Page-

**<http://www.facebook.com/SupportGayMarriagesInIndia>**

# ON SCREEN DEPICTION:

## Less *Lust*, More *Love*

If gay movies were in simpler format, it would be much easier for activism to change people's views about the community, writes

**Davneet Narang**

I was watching TV with family, *Hum Aapke Hain Kaun* (a classic hit family movie in Hindi). Conversationally, my Aunt said, "This director's all movies are so clean! Look what he's used for sets- green fields, for props- fruits, and for theme- simple love. I dont know what's with the new girls- all dancing in short bikinis in hot discos."

It struck me that if gay movies (i.e. mainstream Bollywood gay movies, which are few of course) were in this old and simpler format, it would be so much easier for activism to change people's views about our community (no offence to current activists and their genuine hard work to bring visibility to community, I salute them for everything they have done for us). By simpler format in movies, I mean- two boys falling in love (not because of hot looks or abuse or complicated psychological situations, but because of plain vanilla love), holding hands and walking down a beautiful garden (instead of licking each other's bodies in the bed), one guy's family has accepted the relationship, the other's family hasn't, there's some sweet emotional drama like there used to be in those melodramatic black n white movies, and then all ends well with a *Hum Sath-Sath Hain* music, with both families living with the gay couple all under one roof. A sweet simple dreamy movie that a gay guy / a lesbian girl can watch with his/her family, thus helping the family to come to terms with the concept of different sexual orientations, without actually witnessing any gross sex scenes. A kiss will be the height of physical intimacy allowed in such

movies. Clean and pretty!

We might be tempted to produce duplicates of *Eating Out* and *Short Bus* in Bollywood. We might want to bring in complex elements like one of the heroes being Bi. Or one of them having AIDS. But hold on!! I am not talking about movies for the gay audience (lets leave that upto Hollywood for the moment). I am talking about movies for the straight Indian audience, whom we want to get used to the fact that queer love exists and is simple. Why frighten them with our intra-community complications and politics? Why not present them with a simple goodey-sweet image of a happy queer world, where the



A scene from *Dunno Y.. Na Jaane Kyun*

heroine's sorrow and happiness lies in her family's decision to accept/reject her female lover. ( Will they accept a bahu for their beti ?) Let's start with simpler stuff like mimicing Juste Une Questione D'amour. Instead of jumping to main-course, let's serve the straight people some starters, won't we?

I mean, look at this movie Dunno Y, Na Jaane Kyu. (Disclaimer: I haven't seen the movie yet because it didn't release in Pune, so please forgive any comments that contradict facts.) I know it took great pains and hard work to get actors and cast together to make a gay-themed movie on such a large scale in India. And Lata Mangeshkar singing a song for it is a salut able achievement, no doubt!! And the wars with the censor board and unavoidable controversies with media.... it takes huge amounts of perseverance to go through such an experience of epic proportions. (I know this because I once tried to put up a gay drama in my college and failed.) I bow down to the makers of the movie for the daring feat accomplished. BUT, BUT, BUT !! There is a big "but" here. (Stop reading big "butt" you pervert!) BUT I can't take my family (to whom I just came out) to a movie whose cover poster shows two naked guys in an intimate embrace. The movie would have gotten a warmer reception by my family had it a poster of two dressed-up sober guys, just holding hands, with their families around.

A note of appreciation goes to whoever was responsible for the gay-sub-plot in the daily-soap Maryada. The representation of the gay-couple was exactly the sober-ised sort of representation I was searching for. Similarly, introduction of Hijras in Agneepath as mighty and trustable guardians was applaudable. Guess it's time we show them in more interesting roles like teachers and doctors. Hopefully we will have some lesbian movie soon (no, I dont consider Fire (1996) as a lesbian movie).

## The representation of the gay-couple (in Maryada) was exactly the sober-ised sort of representation I was searching for

I know that there is an angle about equal rights to present queer sex in movies because the straights are already doing so. I mean look at their songs- Chhokra Jawan Re, Chipka Le Fevicol Se and (my favourite) Jumpingum-Pumpingum. If they can flaunt their sexual activities on-screen, why can't we? And what about the sexual freedom of sleeping with anyone without any strings attached?

Of course we want all those rights and freedom and broad minded thinking, but I guess we (as a minority) are asking for too much and too soon. Let's go step by step. Let's P R I O R I T I S E . T h e

immediate need for an activist should not be the right-to-on-screen-sexual-freedom, but to change the dirty-ish-image-of-queer-people-in-general-Indian-mindset. To remove the lust-element and introduce the love-element.

The last line of above paragraph applies not only to the Indian-straight-mindset but also to the Indian-gay-mindset. A large majority of gays that I have met, believe that boy-to-boy-relation can only be for sex, not for true love (and hence marrying a girl is unavoidable part of life.. blah blah.. crap crap.. One of them actually laughed out loud when I talked about equal marriage rights for gays and lesbians! He just couldn't wrap his head around the idea..) We need to change our own misconceptions too, don't we? Are not most of us ready to drop our pants for almost any hot guy with place? If we wish the straights to respect us and our way-of-love, we need to begin with us respecting ourselves.

Not trying to lecture about, because I am a self-confessed sexual-compulsive ever-so-horny-slut. But believe me, I'm on the mend, I'm trying to prioritise things, first of which is to gain the trust and respect of my family, irrespective of gay or straight. To be a good son, irrespective of whether married or not. Back to watching TV with family- I wish Nach Baliye had a hot gay couple rocking the dance floor, I wish, I wish, I wish, I wish....

# IN THE WORLD OF GOD...

GOD HAS CREATED US ALL, HE WILL LOVE EVERYONE EQUALLY, WRITES THE BIGDREAMER.

*"THE BIBLE DID NOT ARRIVE BY FAX FROM HEAVEN"*

- DAN BROWN



The Bible is a product of man. Not of God. The Bible didn't fall magically from the clouds, neither did any of the other religious books. Man always wanted to dominate. It's clearly seen in the way we create our world out of nature, destroying nature. We dominated the animals saying we have six senses. Similarly we have dominated women by telling about the apple Eve had tasted. Announcing Eve was made from Adam's ribs. A complete lie! God has created us all, He will love everyone equally. Being gay was quoted as a sin, if so, why did God send us this way? It is not a disease or illness, it is just like the colour of your skin, hair, eye- they were decided when you were born. It is obviously the attitude of these men to dominate over others, and they did dominate us using the Bible. A true child of God, who believes in God alone, will know that this was the cheap attitude of few men, to corrupt God's messages to us with their own principles.

Indeed, they achieved what they wanted, haven't they dominated animals and plants, gays and lesbians, and women over centuries? Finally the day has come, women are about to gain their equality. Gays and lesbians have started fighting for their rights. Man has understood the balance of the world, understood his mistakes of extensive needs he created for himself.

It is time for human beings to get together against gender, orientation, age, caste, religion, race, language and the difference between them and work along with Nature to create the "World of God".

# The Identification Of A Drag Queen - Vol 1

**-Mr. ClosetQ**



**H**e applies a pack of highly over the top pink mascara and screaming tones of purple blush. The hair worn today is marigold and ultra long compared to the teal short bob worn in the morning. The eye lashes are long enough to catch every other jealous

Barbie's eye. The dress is a gangrene mix of razzmatazz and mismatch colours. The heels worn are ultra sky high and he struts with equal élan and swag. Wait you ask. Is he a second rate Gaga? No! The new transformed fierce woman is no Gaga but yes, she is an elegant flower just being blossomed from her cocoon. Call her she or call her he (yes, a he), she is just every other girl being kept in the orthodox limitations of a man. Ladies and gentlemen, here arrives a drag queen.

Being projected in to a replica of a B grade woman does not provide justice to her identity. She holds her horses after much deliberation to make her own mark in this gender specific world. Bullying, eve teasing and being humiliated are just some of the stains she has been subjected to during her entire life. One look behind her quirky get up and people whisper in hushed tones, "Is she a psychopathic woman who has just been eloped from a mental asylum?" Be it performing for an audience or simply trotting in front of such catty people, she is a woman who is mercilessly thrown at the public eye 24x7, 365 days a year. This pretty much explains her pan caked make

up and outrageous wigs to cover such every day tribulations and insensitive condemnation. So should we display affection in the form of sympathy for this delicate little incense filled flower?

The answer is a no. She needs no pity for she is here to stay. Though she shares a dark and horrific past, her sheer joy in walking like a diva and lighting a dull room to its fully glory explains the very fact that she is a strong individual. Away from her past and worthless luck, she has fought every tooth and nail to become what she is today. Truly a queen with utmost order. It is intriguing and astounding to see her weave many of her fantasy filled dreams conclude to reality. Be it a character she is portraying today or making a statement by wearing thick florescent lipstick, she is well aware of the technical knowhow on how to be a stand out amongst a regular crowd. She knows no definitions for she is an ever changing chameleon spreading her fuchsia coloured wings wherever she goes. Switching from Marilyn Monroe on Saturday to a life sized Barbie for the rest of the week, she jumps from one alter ego to another with impeccable justice and poise.

So why are they shunned around the world? I have a theory. We humans as a race are so accustomed to scheduled emotions and mannerisms that we have almost forgotten the dire need for change. They are here to splash some tangy colours on our black and white faces. Their personalities are exceptionally lady like reminiscing that she is the one to be given respect and though full of beans should not be taken for granted. They are way too liberal in being humorous almost to the extent of creating a bold statement around. But they are naughty girls who just wanna have fun! Cyndi Lauper, you listening?

# LET THE CARDS SPEAK

- Rohan Noronha

Hello dear fellows and gorgeous people, it is such a pleasure to connect with you once again. I hope you have had a lovely time in Dec, celebrating Christmas and New Year with mom, dad and my darling dog. Oh yes, I haven't forgotten you guys at all, but I agree and apologize I have been a little busy so couldn't connect much, but do let me know how have you been? How has the card readings for 2012 helped you so far? What else would you like me to include in this section?

And having said that, from the GAYLAXY family, I send love and blessings to each one of you reading this. And without much ado, let me bring to you what the cards have to say for the whole year!!

## Aries Mar 21 - Apr 19

We are going to lay down what has passed and open the door to what's in store for us. And for each month ahead in 2013, I would ask you to be open to new thoughts, ideas and memories to be. Don't worry about what never happened last year according to your will, because this year is a magical one for you. If possible pull back on your energy, you have to go inside and clear that fear which happened late December 2012. You have to go outside and be a little in nature, answers to your perils would come from there, especially near a water body.



## Gemini May 21 - June 20

Big changes are coming your way, and remember, the angels and the Goddess doesn't want you to ignore a moment that passes by, which means you have to keep your senses alert. There would be a lot of things to make informed decisions upon, especially your career for this year. Don't rush into making a decision, take your time and allow things to come by. Do not and I repeat, don't allow someone else's decision influence you, it's only you who would be best to make that decision, irrespective of whose help you take at the end of the day.



## Taurus Apr 20 - May 20

Flexibility is important, there could be a change of course for most of us. If you listen and clearly focus on what it is that you want, and allow yourself to be led, you would see things that need you to speak up and your healing power. Don't look at someone else to lead you on, 2013 wants you to be the leader in all forms, sans ego and pride. Only when you realize your own potential and honor it, would the world honor you as an individual, a leader to say so.



## Cancer Jun 21 - Jul 22

Listen to that heart of yours, listen to the inner voice. Pay attention to your feelings. You have an inner child which is wanting to sleep and go back a step. You may wonder if this is practical or not, but you need to make time for yourself alone and create that perfect moment for your needs. When and how would that happen, only you can be the best judge!! I wish I could tell you exact dates, but we never know what tomorrow mornings sunrise would bring, but 2013 is surely going to be your year!!



**Leo** July 23 - Aug 22

Ah!! My favorite card and a very lucky one too. This is more of a magicians card, all you have desired is now going to manifest for you. There are many secrets and mysteries of the past that needs to be released, especially because the past was traumatizing. There were instances in 2012 which made no sense to you, which gave you a lot of pain and the hurdles were too high to climb, but all that is now over. There are plenty of resources coming your way to make things right for you, and yes, the Goddess this year blesses you abundantly.

**Libra** Sept 23 - Oct 22

New romance is here and you would find someone, maybe your soulmate. You would make new friends, new business alliances, your body would be purified, your soul would scream of joy and happiness. Last year you almost emptied your basket with whatever you have had to give to the world, to your lover, to your friends, to your family. Now this 2013 would bring it all back to you ten times ten. Death is killing of the negative past, and rejuvenating your soul, so don't worry; all will be opened as per the divine plan for you.

**Virgo** Aug 23 - Sept 22

This year would be more of learning, in any form, mostly teaching and spirituality. Book workshops where you can learn to give, take classes which can help you learn how to contribute to society, how you can make the truth come out in a positive way. There is a major role which you would play in transforming many lives around, not only yours this year but many. And by doing so, you would find many of your former friends coming back, relationships being healed and many of the "so called enemies" in your life fading away.

**Scorpio** Oct 23 - Nov 21

Plenty of joy and happiness for you my friend. Rejoice for the happiest days are in the pipeline this year, I cannot tell you how happy I am for you. If you enjoy every moment, good or bad, you will find your life taking shape, but when you allow things to flow on its own and if you don't push them any further, success this year will be kissing you all over, especially when it comes to LOVE!!





### Sagittarius Nov 22 - Dec 21



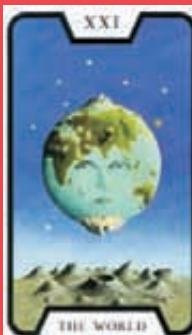
Romance and twin flames coming to you, this is the answer for most of you who felt there is no romance. It could come in the form of a business partnership, a spiritual romantic relationship, a friend who silently loved you maybe and now says I DO; you never know. Just be hell of a positive person, which most of you are and see how you bring in the best this year. Sagittarius are very sensitive and they can catch, so I don't need to tell you more, get the drift my lovelies.

### Aquarius Jan 20 - Feb 18

O wow, plenty of love and not only romantic love but loving yourself is what they want you to focus on. You have to get in touch and socialize with people, someone from a long lost friendship will come back and bring abundant smiles to you. Don't allow the lies of the media or the relatives bring you down, keep asking the Goddess and the angels to work things out for you. It is alright for you to be skeptical when your gut instinct says so, but don't use ego and pride there.



### Capricorn Dec 22 - Jan 19



Many of your questions from 2012 would be answered in 2013. As I always said, a lot of times we need answers and fast, but I would ask you to pray and ask for the power to go through it all, because at times you may be confused. The corrupt rulers wouldn't harm you anymore, and even your darkness within wouldn't confuse you anymore. Just push through them all and you will see how interesting your life, especially your love life improves.

### Pisces Feb 19 - Mar 20

Don't ever give up on your plans for the first half of 2013, this is a year when you would make things work in your favor. That pesky nagging boss wouldn't bother you anymore, because the ace of cups shows you a better opportunity coming your way. Also in your personal life, you need to make some changes and only you would know what that would be. But I ask you to sit and contemplate on what you want around and what you would not want.



# BROTHERLY LOVE

- Count\_tequillaa

I open the cupboard and browse through the hanging suit-cases. You had left them beautifully arranged according to colour. Just like most things you tastefully arranged over the years across our home. I finally find the one I was looking for. I pull out the suit, old and faded. As I lay it out on the bed, I feel something stiff in one of the breast pockets. I pull it out. A sheet of paper, yellowed with time, with your writing, overflowing the sheet.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Brotherly Love...?

Hey 'dude'  
Wazzup??  
Okay,  
I know that  
That's so not me.  
But  
If I were to call you  
By the name my heart has  
given you  
You'd turn around and  
walk away...

Yes,  
I've dreamed  
My first erotic dreams  
about you-  
Your dark gums,  
Your skinny awkward  
hairless limbs  
Now blossomed into  
Broad shoulders  
And strong arms  
Pillar-like legs



And curling hair on your chest-  
Proof of your activated manhood,  
Proof that your hormones are Raging  
Just as wildly as mine...  
Proof of the Master's handiwork-  
Your doe eyes.

Those desires  
Stirred  
Long before I knew love from lust...  
Those childhood games  
Where you were prince  
And I, your boy princess...

But they seem distant...like faint memories  
Compared  
To yesterday  
When you bent over to pick  
Your mother's flower pots;  
Your vest, wet  
As were the insides of your thighs.  
A pearl of sweat  
Trickled  
Down your nose...

You caught me staring at you  
From across the courtyard  
Where I sat  
Arranging flowers  
In countless vases-  
As countless and empty  
As my nights-  
A strange task for a boy.

You smiled  
And  
With the load you lifted  
You flushed.  
I blushed  
And died a thousand deaths in your gaze...  
And later,  
In the stifling heat  
Of the noon sun,  
I sat behind you on your two-wheeler,

Breathing you in,  
Silently hoping you'd purposely jam the breaks  
And I'd fall on you  
Or  
That you'd put my arms around you  
And say  
'Hold on tight- now and forever...'  
But dreams  
Remain dreams.  
We walked amidst graves,  
You clicking pictures,  
Me freezing time  
And saving images of you.

You turn around.  
I hoped you'd pull me to you  
And kiss me-  
Here, where our ancestors rest in couple graves-  
And turn me into one of the Stone angels  
That watched over this place.  
You smile,  
Flashing that million watt smile.  
My senses evaporate  
Like drops of water  
Sprinkled on granite grave  
To keep the arranged flowers from burning.  
You lean forward to catch my stumbling self.

A stone angel,  
With outstretched arms  
Beats you to it.  
How I long for your long lashes  
To lock and lash  
Mine.

How I long to lick  
Your chocolate face  
And kiss the bulges of your arms.  
How I long to be lost in  
Your loving embrace,  
To curl your chest hair with  
my delicate fingers  
And breathe in your musky

aroma  
As I bask in your undivided attention...  
But as long as desire burns in my heart-  
That desire that refuses To speak its name-

So long shall I be unable  
To share  
The Fruit of the Forbidden Tree with you.  
For thy mother and my father are siblings...  
And my love Shall be forgotten  
Like our childhood games...

\*\*\*\*\*

'Elijah! Is everything alright?'

It's Doris, your best friend, who is staying over to help sort things out.

'Yeah! I'm fine.'

'Thank God! I was worried! You've been in there a while. You may wanna hurry up. We need to leave soon!'

'Alright! I'll be out in five.'

I wipe the tears off my face with the back of my palms and get into the suit I wore at our wedding. I fold this first poem you wrote to me twenty seven years ago, and look across the room to your side of the bed. I sigh, and walk to the car that will take me to your funeral.

*This is the winning entry for a short-story competition held by [Support Gay Marriages in India](#) page*

# Butchered Chastity

-Dr. Himadri Roy

I t was my first night in the middle school,

From nascent childhood I stepped to puberty,  
From dormitory, I shifted to a room for four,  
I was warned that I would be ragged by them,  
But I didn't want to escape, instead face it boldly.

My first night in the room changed my life,  
All my room-mates were seniors,  
As the night fell, lights of all rooms turned off,  
Translucently my room-mates faces were visible,  
As the night lamp glowed upon their faces,  
I could feel someone holding my hands,  
A soft voice commands me not to scream,  
I was turned around, my hands tied to the cot,  
A sweat-odor cloth came near my mouth,  
It was tied properly around,  
So that no noise of protest can utter out.

I could realize a hand unbuttoning my shirt,  
The same hand went down near my waist,  
My pyjama was untied and pulled down,  
I couldn't figure out what was happening,  
Two guys sat upon my legs,  
My body surrendered to the physical power,  
After a pulse of moment I felt,  
A hard object entering my anus,  
I wanted to scream with pain,

Except tears and humming sound nothing emerged,  
I felt the hard object was thrusting in and out,  
Compelled the area to become anesthetic,  
I realized that the hard object was nothing but,  
The penis of someone,  
As a warm fluid flowed inside my body,  
I presumed my ragging was over.

But soon another hard penis got penetrated in,  
The same thrusting motion repeated  
But with much vigor and pace,  
After several minutes of such thrusts,  
The same feeling of warm fluid flowing in me,  
This torture continued with the third,  
I didn't say anything for I could not.

Soon I realized that my hands were untied,  
The sweat-odor hanky was also removed,  
I wanted to stretch back my legs to normalcy,  
But couldn't with severe pain,  
I touched the area and the bed sheet below,  
Could feel the damp of my butchered chastity,  
Hugging the pillow, tears sang the lullaby,  
To solace and balm the unseen wound,  
Vanity is lost, virginity ruptured,  
In the name of ragging, I was awarded with  
sodomy.

# SUPPORT GROUPS FOR LGBT

## WEST BENGAL

### THE PRATYAY GENDER TRUST

**Contact person :** Anindya Hajra  
**Address :** 293 Jodhpur Park , Calcutta, Pin 700 068  
**Phone :** 033 2464 1893

**E-mail :**  
[pratyaygendertrust@yahoo.co.in](mailto:pratyaygendertrust@yahoo.co.in)

**Target populations :** Hijras, MSM (particularly kotis)

### DURBAR MAHILA SAMANWAYA COMMITTEE

**Contact person :** Mrinal Kanti Dutta  
**Address :** 12/5 Nilmoni Mitra Street, Kolkata West Bengal, India  
**Phone :** 033 2543 7451 / 7560, +91-33 2530 3148  
**Email:** [dmsc@durbar.org](mailto:dmsc@durbar.org)

**Website:**  
<http://www.durbar.org/>

**Target populations :** Female, Male and Transgender sex workers

### SAATHII CALCUTTA

**Contact person :** Pawan Dhall, Chief Coordinator  
**Address :** 229 Kalitala Main Road, Purbanchal (N), Kolkata Pin 700 064  
**Phone :** 033 2484-4835  
**E-mail :** [saathii@yahoo.com](mailto:saathii@yahoo.com) / [pawan30@yahoo.com](mailto:pawan30@yahoo.com)  
**Website :** [www.saathii.org](http://www.saathii.org)  
**Target populations :** MSM in general, male sex workers, transgender people, bisexuals

### Sappho

**Contact person :** Malavika  
**Address :** 11A Jogendra Gardens(South),Ground Floor, Kolkata, Pin 700 078  
**Phone :** 033 2441 9995

**Email:** [malvi99@hotmail.com](mailto:malvi99@hotmail.com) , [sappho1999@rediffmail.com](mailto:sappho1999@rediffmail.com)

### Website:

<http://sapphokolkata.org/>

**Target Population :** Lesbians and bisexual women

### Prantik Bongaon

**Contact person :** Niloy Basu  
**Address :** C/o Niloy Basu, Peada Para, P.O. Bongaon, Pin 743 235  
**Phone :** 91 3251 257 029, 9332254855  
**E-mail :** [ajnil@rediffmail.com](mailto:ajnil@rediffmail.com) / [ajnil123@rediffmail.com](mailto:ajnil123@rediffmail.com)

**Target populations :** Hijras, Kothis, MSM in general

### Northern Black Rose

**Contact person :** Souvik Ghosal  
**Address :** C/o Hori Roy, M. B. Mukherjee Nursing Home, Hill Cart Road, Rajani Bagan, Khudiram Palli, Sillioguri 734 401  
**Phone :** 91-9433009116

**E-mail:**  
[northernblack\\_rose@yahoo.co.in](mailto:northernblack_rose@yahoo.co.in)

**Target populations :** Hijras, Meitis, other sexual minorities,

### Astitva Dakshin

**Contact person :** Debasish Mitra  
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**E-mail :**  
[astitvadakshin@yahoo.co.in](mailto:astitvadakshin@yahoo.co.in)

**Target populations :** Hijras, Kothis

### Madhya Banglar Sangram

**Contact person :** Arunava Nath  
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## SWIKRITI

**Contact person :** Rajarshi Chakraborty, Secretary

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**Phone :** +91 9831743608, 9433009190

**E-mail:**  
[swikriti2003@hotmail.com](mailto:swikriti2003@hotmail.com)

**Target populations :** Bisexual women, lesbians, MSM in general, transgender people

### PEOPLE LIKE US (PLUS)

**Contact person :** Agniva Lahiri  
**Address :** 254, Bonomali Bannerjee Road, Kolkata - 700082, West Bengal, India

**Phone :** 033 2402 9305  
**E-mail :** [pluskolkata@gmail.com](mailto:pluskolkata@gmail.com)

**Target populations :** Support group for young gender variants

### SWAPNIL

**Contact person :** SUMAN RUDRA

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**E-mail :**  
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**Target populations :** MSM & TG Groups

## MAHARASHTRA

### Samapathik Trust, Pune

**Contact person :** Bindumadhav Khire

**Address :** Samapathik Trust, 1004 Budhwar Peth, Office No. 9, 3rd Floor, Building Name: Rameshwar Market, Pune

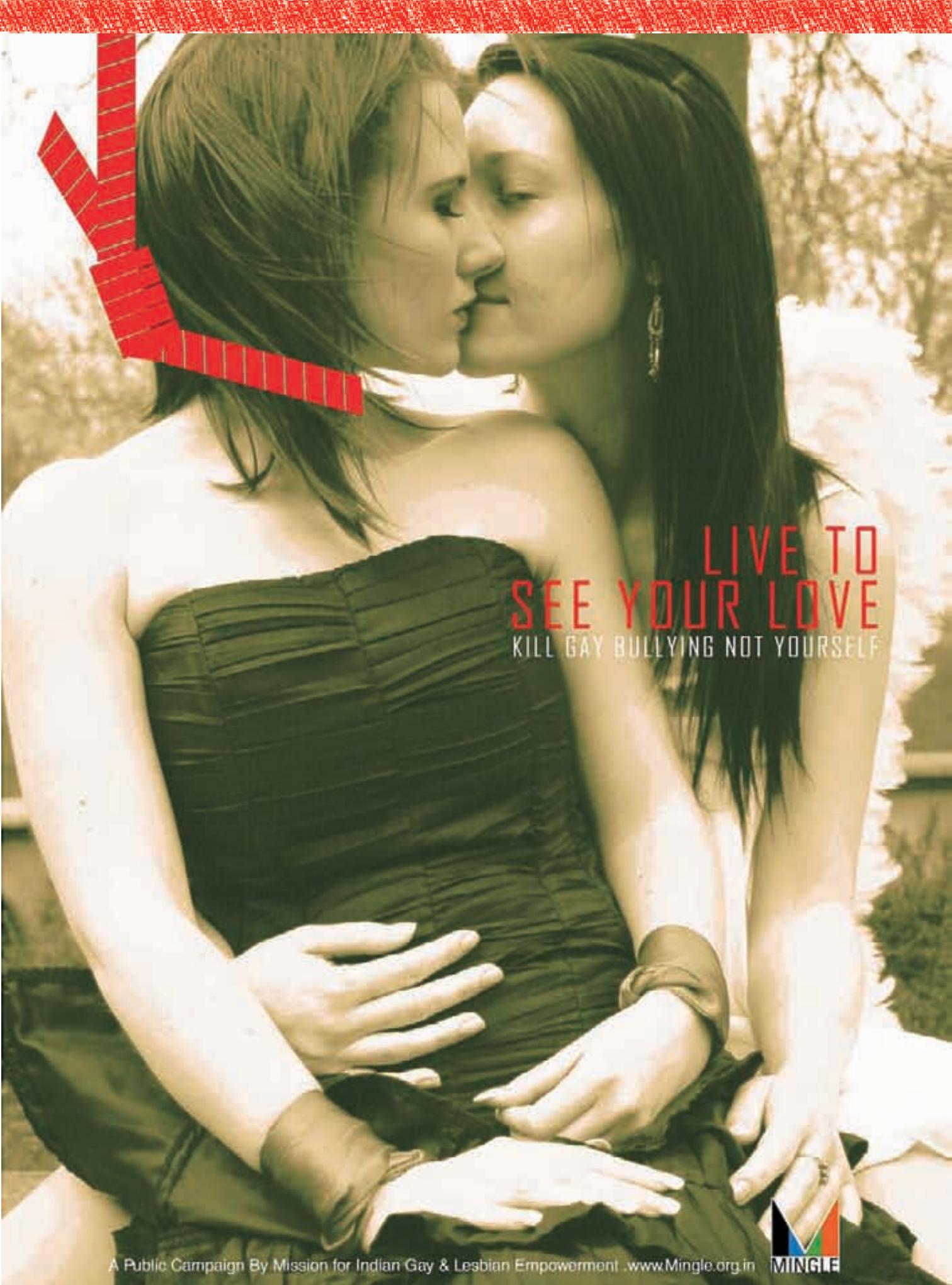
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Send us your feedback, suggestions, articles and coming out experiences to:  
[editor@gaylaxymag.com](mailto:editor@gaylaxymag.com)





LIVE TO  
SEE YOUR LOVE

KILL GAY BULLYING NOT YOURSELF